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ABSTRACT

A national survey of faculty, administrators, and trustees from a cross-section of 45 higher education institutions investigated preferences in institutional goals and methods of assessing progress toward them. The specific goal areas were derived from the Institutional Goals Inventory. Results were analyzed according to the individual respondents' institutional responsibilities and institution type, and are reported at length. A brief bibliography is included. (MSE)

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PRODUCTIVITY ASSESSMENT:

A STUDY OF FACULTY, ADMINISTRATOR, AND TRUSTEE PREFERENCES

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
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PRODUCTIVITY ASSESSMENT:
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Introduction

The definition, conceptualization, and measurement of educational productivity are dependent upon an undergirding view of the purposes of education and the manner in which it ought to be organized to accomplish these purposes. Quite simply, educational purpose and productivity measurement must fit together like hand and glove. An inappropriate fit threatens to rend the glove or so cramp the encased hand as to render it clumsy if not ineffective.

Three paradigms of educational purposes and resultant productivity schemes have been proposed elsewhere (Kirschling and Romney, 1977). These three paradigms are the:

- Free-market learning enterprise
- Planned-outcomes learning enterprise
- Learning community

Of these three paradigms, the former two currently dominate while the third deserves consideration not only to preserve an historically important element of higher education but also to provide an alternative form of learning opportunity.

The planned-outcomes paradigm of postsecondary education is virtually guaranteed continued existence, at least for the foreseeable future and it is on this paradigm that the remarks of this paper are focused. At least the following factors underwrite the model's survival:

- The enrollment bubble now emerging from the nation's colleges and universities and its associated ramifications for controlled retrenchment;

- The ubiquitous calls for accountability and demonstrations of productivity, one response to which involves providing evidence of goals (planned-outcomes) formulated, acted upon, and evaluated; and,
- The continuing struggle for financial support in an area where advocates of other, equally beneficial social goals compete for funds.

Given that the planned-outcomes paradigm of postsecondary education will continue to impact the conduct of a large sector of postsecondary education, a major concern is how to make the planning process and the resulting system more responsive to individual needs and expectations. Numerous authors have argued the necessity of participative decision-making, individual involvement in organizational goal setting and evaluation activities, and recognition of both individual and organizational needs to promote organizational health and effectiveness (Schein, 1969; Argyris, 1962; Schein and Bennis, 1965). To look briefly at the ramifications of a people oriented planning system was the leitmotif guiding the research study described in these pages.

Research Design

A series of crucial questions revolving around the theme of adding individual perspectives to the planned-outcomes approach to higher education stems from concerns about the ability and interests of individuals to become so involved. Moreover, once involved, what do their views indicate about planned-outcomes (goals) and their evaluation.

In order to examine these concerns, the author conducted a study entitled "Institutional Goal Achievement: Measures of Progress" with the following purposes:

(1) Assess the interests of three campus constituencies (faculty, administrators, and trustees) in being involved in institutional goal setting and assessment processes;

(2) Examine the acceptability of specific goal areas (or planned-outcomes) to these three audiences in six kinds of institutions;

(3) Assess perceptions as to which goal areas can be measured and how they can be measured, as viewed by trustees, administrators, and faculty;

(4) Gather information regarding perceptions of appropriateness of specific kinds of information as measures of progress toward the achievement of broadly-stated institutional goals;

(5) Determine if the appropriateness of the measures of progress toward the achievement of institutional goal areas varies significantly among the three constituent groups;

(6) Determine if the appropriateness of the measures of progress for different institutional goal areas varies significantly among six types of institutions.

The study population consisted of 1150 faculty, trustees and administrators from 45 colleges and universities throughout the country. These institutions were classified into six major categories, as follows:

- Public Doctoral-Granting Institutions (7)
- Private Doctoral-Granting Institutions (3)
- Public Comprehensive Universities and Colleges (9)
- Private Comprehensive Universities and Colleges (4)
- Libral Arts Colleges (12)
- Two-Year Colleges and Institutes (10)

Faculty and trustee respondents to the study were chosen randomly whereas administrators were selected based on their responsibility for the following activities or functions:

(1) Chief executive officer

(2) Chief academic officer

(3) Chief financial officer

(4) Chief student services officer

(5) Dean of the graduate school

(6) Dean of arts and sciences (or general studies or transfer programs)

(7) Dean of professional schools (law, business, or occupational programs)

(8) Physical Sciences department chairperson

(9) Social Sciences department chairperson

(10) Humanities department chairperson

(11) Communication Arts department chairperson

(12) Director of institutional research or analytical studies

(13) Chief planning officer

The survey instrument to which these individuals were asked to respond consisted of two principal sections. The first contains demographic and identifying information about the respondent. The second dealt with measures of progress for twenty broadly-stated institutional goal areas. The goal areas were derived from the Institutional Goals Inventory (IGI) developed by and used with permission of the Educational Testing Service (ETS). The IGI consists of several specific goal statements in each of twenty institutional goal areas, thirteen of which are designated as outcome goal areas (*academic development, intellectual orientation, individual personal development,*

humanism/altruism, cultural/aesthetic awareness, traditional religiousness, vocational preparation, advanced training, research, meeting local needs, public service, social egalitarianism, and social criticism/activism). The remaining seven goal areas are referred to as process goal areas by ETS (*freedom, democratic governance, community, intellectual/aesthetic environment, innovative climate,* off-campus learning, and accountability/efficiency*).

Associated with each IGI goal area on the study questionnaire were sets of four to eleven measures of progress or possible items of information to be used to demonstrate progress toward the achievement of the goal area in question. All in all, respondents, in addition to the twenty goal areas, were asked to respond to 125 measures of progress. These measures were developed and contributed by the staffs of NCHEMS, WICHE, and the Higher Education Center of the School of Education at the University of Colorado. In addition, a panel of experts, identified by the author and staff members at NCHEMS, reviewed and supplemented the list of measures.

To complete the questionnaire, respondents were asked to rate the degree to which each goal area <u>should be</u> a goal of his or her institution. Secondly, the respondent was asked to indicate the degree to which each item of information was considered to be an appropriate measure of progress for the goal area. The scale of appropriateness for each of these types of questions consisted of six categories: inappropriate, low, below average, average, above average, and high. In the scoring process, these were assigned point values of one through six, respectively. An example of measures of progress and the goal areas to which they relate is illustrated in Figure 1.

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* Note that ETS gave this goal area the name of *Innovation*. Pilot test activities indicated that *Innovative Climate* was more descriptive.

	should be a goal						
B. **Intellectual Orientation.** (Illustrative goals in this area include attitudes about learning and intellectual work; familiarity with research and problem-solving methods; the ability to synthesize knowledge from many sources, and/or the capacity for self-directed learning and a commitment to lifelong learning.)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
1. Student and/or former student perceptions and evaluations about their attitudes and beliefs toward new and different intellectual work or experience (follow-up questionnaire).	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
2. Student and/or former student perceptions and evaluations of their interest in continued self-initiated study and inquiry (follow-up questionnaire).	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
3. Student and/or former student ability to create original perspectives, explanations, and implementations (standardized instruments).	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
4. Student and/or former student ability to formulate and analyze problems (standardized instruments).	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
5. Quality of graduate-level theses or dissertations completed (institutional records).	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
6. Continuing, active intellectual involvement of former students in other than formal, advanced study (follow-up study).	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
7. Student evaluations of courses (course evaluation studies).	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
8. Scholarly works produced by students and/or former students that are considered suitable for publication (institutional study).	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
9. _____	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

FIGURE 1

MEASURES OF PROGRESS RELATED TO GOAL AREA B:
INTELLECTUAL ORIENTATION

Study Findings

The study produced a wealth of information, only a small portion of which has been thoroughly examined. A detailed examination of the results and conclusions obtained thus far are recorded elsewhere (Romney, 1976). Many of the results, which proved to be unexpected, interesting, and worthy of highlighting in this type of report, are summarized below:

- Conducted during the summer months of the year (1976) when many institutions and faculty operate under reduced schedules, workloads, and expectations, the survey achieved a surprisingly high response rate. As illustrated in the following table, the rate of return exceeded 74 percent in the aggregate for all three types of respondents and six types of institutions.

TABLE I

RESPONSE RATES FOR THREE TYPES OF RESPONDENTS
IN SIX TYPES OF INSTITUTIONS

CELL KEY:

NO. RESPONDED
PERCENT RESPONDED

TYPE OF RESPONDENT	TYPE OF INSTITUTION						
	PUBLIC DOCTORAL	PRIVATE DOCTORAL	PUBLIC COMPREHENSIVE	PRIVATE COMPREHENSIVE	LIBERAL ARTS	TWO-YEAR COLLEGES	TOTAL
TRUSTEE	12	3	7	7	16	19	64
	60%	33%	26%	64%	44%	63%	48%
ADMINISTRATOR	71	28	73	33	63	75	343
	90%	82%	72%	79%	82%	89%	82%
FACULTY	77	62	62	74	90	76	441
	77%	62%	62%	74%	90%	76%	74%
TOTAL	160	93	142	114	169	170	848
	80%	65%	62%	75%	79%	79%	74%

- The low response rates of trustees, in addition to the comments made on many of the returned questionnaires, suggest an apparent lack of familiarity on the part of trustees with the institutions and their operations. Many were able to address the issue of goal area appropriateness but regarded the determination of appropriate measures of progress beyond their knowledge, abilities, or responsibilities.

If the specification of measures of progress for institutional goal areas is one of the important stepping stones to translating these goals into statements of measureable objectives, then one must wonder what the role of trustees in such a process would be. Moreover, trustees, perhaps more than any other institutional constituency, have an interest in evidence of progress toward achieving institutional goals. Thus, that trustees believed themselves to be inappropriate respondents and yet are some of its most obvious beneficiaries bespeaks the need for an educational effort on the part of institutions to instruct and involve their boards in institutional goal selection and evaluation.

- With regard to the goal areas, participants from Public and Private Doctoral-Granting institutions place high emphasis on the roles traditionally held for these institutions; that is, research and the pursuit of the full academic/intellectual life. Trustees mostly agree except where obligations of a higher institution to its benefactors are concerned. Ratings of these types of goal areas seems to be more pronounced in the trustee ratings than they are in the ratings of the other groups. For example, the goal areas of *Vocational Preparation* and *Accountability/Efficiency* both appear in the trustee ratings but not in the seven most highly preferred goal areas of faculty or administrators. Moreover, the ratings of appropriateness of goal areas by faculty in Public and Private Doctoral-Granting Institutions underscore their stress on the full academic life and desire that it be protected by the concepts and policies of academic freedom. In summary, there is a strikingly similar emphasis given to the seven goal areas considered

to be most appropriate by all three types of respondents in the Doctoral-Granting Universities.

- Faculty preferences in Public Comprehensive colleges vary only slightly from those of faculty in Doctoral-Granting institutions, implying at least a similarity of expectations and ideals if not a latent desire for what is perceived to be the full academic life more readily attainable in Doctoral-Granting institutions.

- Emphasis on "the individual" is implicitly expressed in the seven most appropriate goal areas of respondents from Liberal Arts and Two-Year Colleges. Whereas respondents from Liberal Arts Colleges emphasize the importance of the individual from an intellectual/academic perspective, Two-Year College and Institutes respondents voice their concern for the individual in terms of *Vocational Preparation* and *Social Egalitarianism* goals.

- Generally, the appropriateness of measures of progress for demonstrating institutional goal achievement did not vary across the faculty, trustees, and administrators. There were only seven instances in which views of the three types of respondents differed significantly. Trustees and administrators differed only with regard to two measures:
  (1) *Scholarly works produced by students and/or former students that are considered suitable for publication* (trustees lower than administrators);
  (2) *Institutional policies and procedures developed to protect the exercise of academic freedom by faculty students* (trustees lower than administrators).

Trustees and faculty ratings of appropriateness differed only for one measure, *Institutional policies and procedures developed to protect the excerise of academic freedom by faculty and students* (faculty significantly higher than trustees).

Administrator and faculty ratings of the appropriateness of measures of progress differed significantly only with regard to five measures:

(1) *Satisfaction of currently enrolled students or recent graduates with their academic development* (administrators rated this as being more appropriate than did faculty),

(2) *Student/faculty ratios* (faculty rated this measure higher than did administrators),

(3) *Amount of release time granted to faculty members for community service* (faculty higher than administrators),

(4) *Availability and use of an institutional information system* (administrator ratings higher than those of faculty members),

(5) *Satisfaction of students and former students with the extent and nature of their educational experience and subsequent employment* (administrators higher than faculty).

- The results suggest that if the following fourteen types of information were collected, progress could be demonstrated toward the achievement of the seven most important goal areas for each of the six institutional types. Moreover, this evidence would be acceptable generally to at least the faculty, administrators, and trustees in each type of institution.

(1) *Student ability to apply knowledge*

(2) *Continuing active intellectual involvement of former students other than formal, advanced study*

(3) *Course offerings and institutional opportunities pertaining to the development of individual goals, values, and personal growth*

(4) *Students and/or former students expressing concern for human welfare and well being*

(5) *Employer satisfaction with former student vocational or professional training*

(6) *Scholarly works produced by graduate students and/or former graduate students considered suitable for publication*

(7) *Basic research publications or other results of scholarly effort produced by students or faculty members during the past year*

(8) *Evaluations and perceptions of members of the community regarding the quality of institutional services available to them*

(9) *Existence of special courses and programs to meet the needs of particular groups of students*

(10) *Institutional policies and procedures developed to protect the exercise of academic freedom by faculty and students*

(11) *Attendance and participation by faculty in the faculty senate or similar body*

(12) *Faculty and staff perceptions and evaluations of internal morale*

(13) *Student and/or faculty attendance at cultural activities sponsored by the institution*

(14) *Impacts of modifications made in courses and programs*

- An examination of the fourteen measures listed above reveals a decided lack of compatibility with measures currently used to provide evidence of productivity. For example, in a study conducted to determine which "outcome measures" of community colleges are collected by state agencies,

Kinnison (1975) found that most are required to supply information on the number of students enrolled, full-time equivalent students, and degrees granted. To such a list one could add "grade-point averages" and "student/faculty ratios" as typically collected measures Yet none of these measures was rated as highly appropriate in this study. In fact, the measures now in use tend to conform more in orientation and substance to those rejected by the participants. This apparent conflict can have some important implications for institutional management and productivity, as well as for statewide control and coordination. If the theme of enumeration survives as the way to provide evidence of accountability, institutional administrators and faculty may begin to operate in accordance with radically different incentive structures. Emphasis on quality and impact would pale in the light of degree production and "body counts." Indeed, it is suspected that most incentives would operate to maximize degree production and body counts. In such a situation, all participants tend to lose in terms of impact and satisfaction. The measures found to be appropriate pieces of evidence provide an empirically substantiated base for such a change.

- Respondents generally reacted negatively to those measures that implied any authenticity for students evaluating courses or providing comments on the relevancy of course materials. Such a rejection of student input suggests that many respondents wish to remind us who they are and hold to the belief that course development and curriculum design should reside within the purview of the organization, where the authority, responsibility, and expertise are currently found. That student evaluations and comments are generally treated with scepticism suggest also that the results of student-driven course and faculty evaluation mechanisms may be largely unheeded.

- One of the more important and obvious conclusions stems from an analysis of the types of information which were rated as being appropriate for measuring progress toward institutional goal achievement. Analysis of the study findings leads to the conclusion that measures which pertain to the quality of the academic experience, the effectiveness of performance, and the utility of and satisfaction with skills acquired are deemed more appropriate by virtually all categories of respondents for measuring progress than are those which are process oriented or are traditional, quantitative measures. Although there were exceptions, the emphasis of participants was on preferences for measures of impact and satisfaction.

- A number of quality and impact measures, along with many others, were also rejected by the study participants. Although the rationale for giving any measure a particular rating was not studied, logic suggests at least five reasons underlie giving any measure a low assessment of appropriateness:

  (1) *Face Validity*: Apparent inapplicability of the suggested measure to the goal area

  (2) *Lack of Background*: Apparently inappropriate source for the information

  (3) *Data Problem*: Apparent infeasibility of collecting the proposed information

  (4) *Institutional Diversity*: Conflicts of institutional style with the style implied by the measure

  (5) *Obtuseness*: Lack of definitional clarity

To overcome some of these reasons for rejecting measures requires little more than concern for and skill in preparing the definitions and justifying that the measure indeed relates to the goal area in question. At the heart of overcoming the other reasons for rejecting measures are found the ghosts of territorial imperatives and personal preference functions, topics which have occupied the minds of scholars for years.

- In a different vein, the results of the study suggest some conclusions regarding the development of goals and measures of progress for these goals. Respondents from six types of institutions from all parts of the country were participants in this study. In general, it can be said that concensus was reached across all types of institutions as to the appropriateness of some goal areas and measures of progress within these goal areas. In some cases, consensus regarding goals and their measures was restricted to agreement within particular institutional types. Therefore, it is suggested that the process of selecting institutional goals and appropriate measures of progress can utilize consensus-building techniques and that these techniques are useful within individual institutions, within systems of similar types of institutions, and across a conglomeration of several types of institutions. The number of goals and appropriate measures thought to be appropriate most likely will decrease as the diversity of institutions involved increases. Yet the task of identifying perceptions of common purposes and of how to measure progress toward their achievement seems to be feasible as well as necessary.

Conclusions

With regard to those whose responsibilities lie in the college personnel field, the results of the study as well as the guiding paradigm of the organization have important implications for the conduct of their efforts.

Even when operating under the influence of the planned-outcomes paradigm, it must be recognized that many groups of individuals have both the interest and capability to provide direction to an operation and determine how its results should be assessed. Most importantly, persons responsible for personnel activities and programs ought to:

- Be aggressive in insisting that their perspectives are recognized and accounted for in those forums where directions are set and assessment schemes are determined;

- Consider their role in facilitating the setting, achieving, and assessing of goals and outcomes of those constituencies whom they serve;

- Consider the implications of advocating the interests of any one constituency over those of others;

- Act as linkages between constituencies served and others in the system in order to ensure broader input into the goal setting and evaluation process;

- Remember that in addition to being an organizational measure, productivity has equal if not greater meaning in individual terms and that individual productivity, as demonstrated in this study, is most preferably expressed in terms of satisfaction, impact, and quality of the learning experience, regardless of organizational goals and their achievement;

- Consider organizing their data collection requirements in terms similar to those expressed by the respondents in this study (i.e., replace numerical counts with indicators of impact, utility, and satisfaction).

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